

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL DISABLED VETERANS WINTER SPORTS CLINIC

SkiGram

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www.wintersportsclinic.va.gov

It's Not Just Skiing!

Explore the Clinic's Alternate Activities

Fighting Champ Gets Inspired by Clinic Vets

UFC Champ Rich Franklin Teams Up With DAV

Secretary Shinseki welcomes Lyvell Gipson, Army Veteran from Canyon Lake, Calif. to the 2009 winter sports clinic.

SPONSORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Tell Your Story

VA and the Library of Congress invite you to be part of an important national effort – the Veterans History Project. This program honors veterans by creating a legacy of their military service. Regardless of branch or period of service, age, military career or experience, the VHP needs your story.

Interviews take place in the Janss Auditorium on the second floor of the conference center. Appointments for interviews are available Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., and on Friday from 9 a.m. till noon. Stop by the media center (in the Erickson Room) to sign up for an appointment. Please make sure to cancel your appoitment if you cannot make it.

American Fighter Inspired by Veterans

He’s been cut, kicked, punched and—most recently—poked so hard in the eye it required a surgical fix. But Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) star Rich Franklin knows that when it comes to toughness, our nation’s disabled veterans are the gold standard.

“In many cases, I have had to overcome much less adversity and maintained a more pessimistic outlook on life than many of our military personnel,” says Franklin, a former two-time UFC middle-

UFC star Rich Franklin checks out the prosthetic band of disabled OIF veteran Portray Woods during a visit to the Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis.



weight champion. “When I believe my cross is too much to bear, a quick trip to a VA hospital will put things into perspective.”

Through many brutal fights in the UFC, Franklin has earned a reputation as a brave, skilled and humble warrior. He says that his strong faith and belief in the spirit of our nation form a deep well from which he draws inspiration.

Franklin is also inspired by the courage of our nation’s wounded veterans. To honor this inspiration,

he teamed up with the Disabled American Veterans to create the Real American Fighters program.

“Visiting the Wounded Warriors Barracks, Bethesda and Walter Reed hospitals begins to change your perspective of the sacrifice our soldiers make,” Franklin says. “It is important to make sure our country does not take their sacrifices for granted. These men and woman are truly Real American Fighters, because more is at stake in their fights on the battlefield than mine in the Octagon.”

The Real American Fighters program allows Franklin to express his appreciation for disabled veterans through hospital visits, special events and public service announcements. He also sells a limited edition t-shirt to raise funds for DAV through his popular American Fighter brand.

An avid snowboarder, Franklin has been looking forward to hitting the slopes with veterans today and tomorrow. Veterans, he’s here for you so please make sure to say hello and introduce yourselves!

For more information on Real American Fighters, check out RealAmericanFighters.org as well as Facebook and MySpace. Sign up and become a friend or a fan!

Goal Ball Clinic Tonight

A goal ball game and clinic will be held in the conference center ballroom tonight at 7 p.m.

Goal ball is a team sport developed for blinded athletes in 1946 to help with the rehabilitation of visually impaired World War II veterans. Over time, the sport evolved into a competitive game and became a part of the Paralympics at the 1980 Summer Games.

Athletes compete in teams of three, attempting to throw a ball with bells or electronic tones into the opposing team’s goal. Sighted players will be blindfolded to play on equal footing with blinded atheletes.

Make sure to come out and play, as it’s a great opportunity to meet your fellow vets and gain a new perspective of how some others live.

what are YOU saying?

What are you most looking forward to this year’s Clinic?



Stephen Bruggeman
Lennox, S.D.
Coast Guard

“This is my first time at the NDWSC, and the first time skiing with my prosthetic. I went to the summer sports clinic and did some surfing. If I can surf, I’m sure I can ski. I am really excited. I need more encouragement in life. Why stop now?”



Sharee Daniels
Seattle, Wash.
Army

“Coming to the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic is all about downhill skiing. Everything else is a close second!”



Charlie Smith
Denver, Colo.
Air Force

“For me, It’s all about snowshoeing, cross country skiing and swimming in the warm spring water in Glenwood Springs!”



Ben Bustos
Fresno, Calif.
Army

“What’s it about? Skiing, skiing, skiing! I just love to ski!”

You’re a Hometown Hero, Spread the News

The hometown news program is designed to let our participants’ newspapers know about their participation and accomplishments at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. The team prepares individual news releases for any veteran requesting one and places it, along with a photo, on the Web site (www.wintersportsclinic.va.gov) to make it available to your local media, family and friends.

We expect to have the releases posted on the Web site (look under “Participant Information”) by April 1 or 2. While we cannot guarantee that the information we submit will

be printed by your newspapers, we do our best to make the information available to many media outlets throughout the country. We will also contact media by e-mail and phone calls to generate interest in this wonderful story. If you requested a release, you will receive a copy of it at the end of the week, along with a photograph of you skiing (if we were able to catch you on the mountain).

Thank you for allowing us to tell your community about your participation in the Winter Sports Clinic this week. By sharing your stories, we hope to reach out to other veterans like you.

Benefits Counseling Available

The VA Regional Office from Denver has veterans’ benefits representatives available this morning at 8 and 11 a.m. in the conference center ballroom for veterans and their families. Information on VA benefits such as compensation for service connected disabilities, home

loans and specially adapted housing, vocational rehabilitation and employment, education and life insurance, are all available. Copies of the 2008 edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents booklet will also be on hand. Stop by and pick up your copy today!



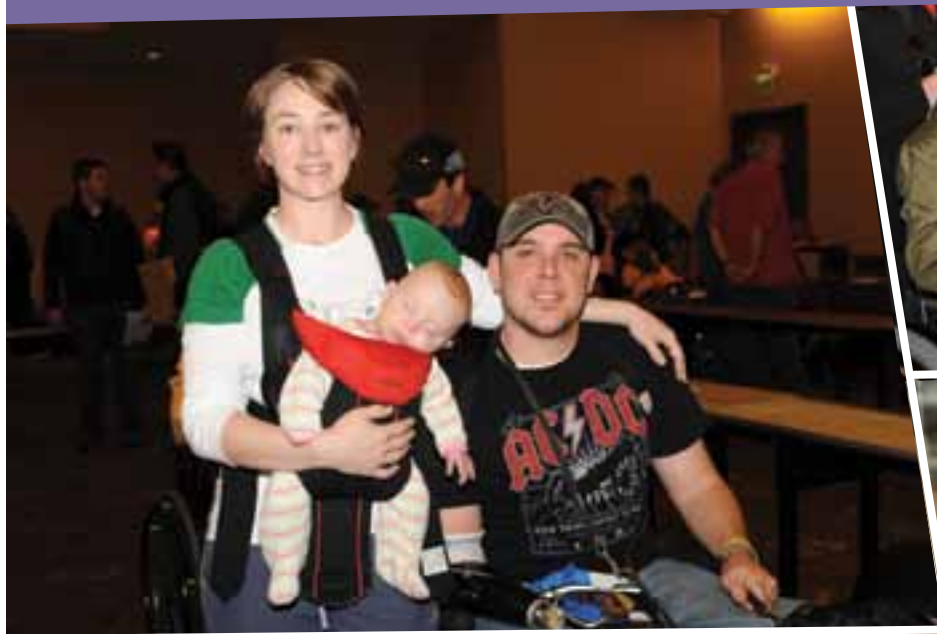
Marine Reunion

Lock the doors and batten down the windows—the Marines are on the loose tonight!

All former and active duty Marines and their guests are invited to attend the 6th Marine Corps Winter Sports Clinic Reunion, being held tonight at the Cirque Bar and Grill at 8 p.m.

Attendees can look forward to free T-shirts, prizes, drinks and finger foods. Live entertainment will be provided by Cowboy Tom Munn and Cowgirl Peggy Malone. Come out and enjoy the good times and camaraderie. Sorry folks, Marines only! **Semper Fi!**

The Show on the Snow!



The Prosthetics Post

Check out the daily “Prosthetics Post” column in the Ski•Gram to get the answers to frequently asked questions regarding Prosthetics services at your VA medical center. At the VA, the Prosthetics & Sensory Aids Service (aka “Prosthetics”) provides all the adaptive equipment, assistive technologies and medical devices that veterans use every day. A team of professionals from VA Central Office Prosthetics is here this week to answer your questions. In addition to the “Prosthetics Post” column, there will be an information booth at meal times on Tuesday and Wednesday as well as a presentation and open forum Tuesday night at 6 p.m. in the Cabaret Room in Silvertree Hotel. Don’t forget to check out our website at www.prosthetics.va.gov. Have a great week at the Clinic! Now on to our first question:

Is a reader being joshed?

Dear Prosthetics Post,
A friend of mine just showed me her awesome new mono-ski she says she just got from VA. Is it really true that VA provides sports and recreation equipment for Veterans, or is she joshin’ me?

Fondly,
Ready To Rip It

Dear Ready to Rip It,
Good news, you can keep her as your friend. You’re not being “joshed!” VA does indeed provide equipment to Veterans who need it. You can work with clinicians and the Prosthetics Service at your local VA medical center to pursue adaptive sport and recreation equipment. The key word is “adaptive.” VA can provide equipment that specifically compensates for your physical disability . . . like a mono-ski, handcycle, tennis wheelchair, etc. There is a list of specific eligibility criteria that you must meet to receive equipment. There’s a great education session this week for everything you need to know about pursuing sports and recreation equipment from VA. It’s Tuesday at 6 p.m. in the Cabaret room in the Silvertree Hotel lower lobby. Hope to see you there!

It's Not Just About Skiing

Skiing may be the primary focus of the Winter Sorts Clinic, but there is certainly more than that when it comes to activities that are fun and challenging.



In fact, many of these alternate activities are beneficial for veterans looking for new options to incorporate into their regular lives. After all, you can’t take the mountain home with you, but ice rinks, swimming pools and fishing holes can be found just about anywhere. So grab an event schedule, sign up at the Alternative Activities desk and get ready for a good time both on and off the slopes.

Snowmobiling – Looking for the rush of an icy wind through your hair and the thrill of slipping through the snow? Then try Snowmobiling at the T Lazy 7 Ranch from 8 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Thursday. There will be two trips per day to the ranch.

Fly Fishing Float Trip – An activity that can be enjoyed year round, learn to fly fish or simply relax and take in the majestic views as the Crystal River’s currents carry you along. The fly fishing float trip is available Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wear warm clothes, bring sunscreen and sign up early as space is limited. A barbeque lunch is provided on the trip. Riders must be able to transfer independently.

Hot Springs – Getting tired of snow and cold? Take a trip to the natural wonder of the world’s largest outdoor mineral pool with 3.5 million gallons of geothermically heated water ready to ease

sore muscles and chase away the chill. The trip to Glenwood Springs is available from 9:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday, and from 9:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday. Bring your own swimwear. Towels and lunch will be provided at the lodge.

Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing and Biathlon Introduction – If you would actually like to see Snowmass Mountain after flying down its slopes, or if you just want to work in a little target practice without leaving the mountain, then take a hike to this activity! Instructors will happily take you along a trail at the top of the village with an air rifle target display at the end. The Elks Lodge will also be providing a barbeque lunch upon return. Times are available from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Scuba Diving – Generally going underwater in the winter is a bad thing, but definitely not when you can learn to scuba in a heated pool to the sounds of Jimmy Buffet. Scuba lessons are available Monday through Thursday from 9 to 11 a.m. and from 2 to 4 p.m. Dive in at the Silver Tree Hotel and pick up a skill to suit you until the snow returns.

Sled Hockey – For those veterans ready to get competitive before the races on Friday or if the rigors of downhill skiing just aren’t rough enough, take it out on your fellow veterans in a game of sled hockey. Get down to the Lewis Ice Arena Monday through Thurs-

day from 9 to 11 a.m. and learn to play real hockey on specialized sleds. Enforcers wanted.

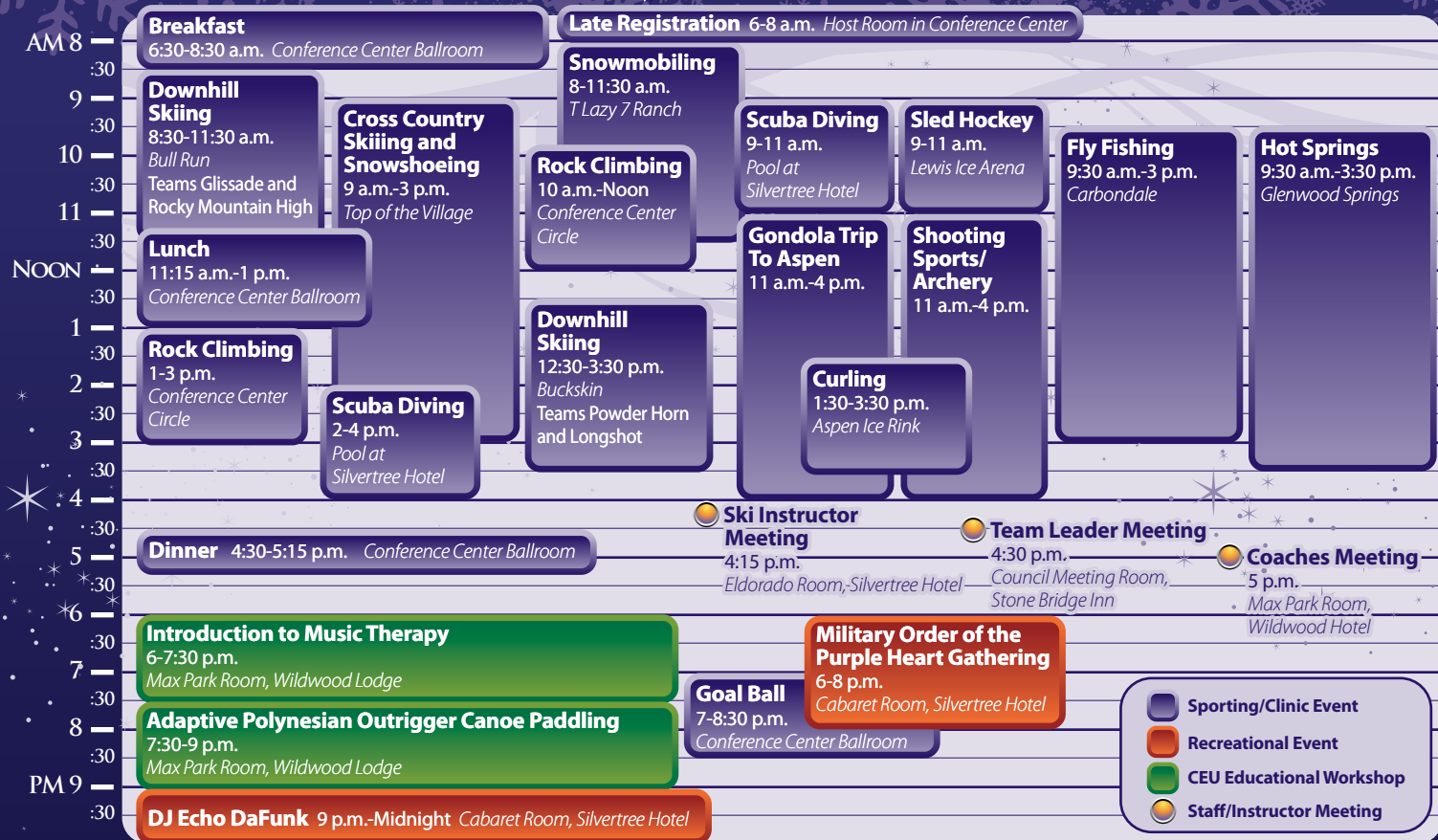
Rock Climbing – After going downhill, try going up! A rock climbing wall will be set up just a stone’s throw away at the conference center circle from 10 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Discover your strength and a challenge worth trying again and again.

Gondola Trip to Aspen – Rise above it all and take in the majesty of the mountains in a gondola ride to Aspen. Enjoy lunch at the Elks lodge before heading back in a Snow Cat. Veterans must be able to independently transfer for this activity Monday through Thursday 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Shooting Sports/Archery – An activity that can be practiced anywhere, veterans are invited to hone their skills and their aim at the Basalt Trap Club in Lake Christine. Participants can grab their rifles or bows from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Lunch will be provided without having to be shot at the trap shooting complex.

Curling – It’s played with a stone and brooms, yet it’s great fun and a Paralympic sport. All veterans, including those in wheelchairs are invited to the Aspen Ice Rink Monday through Thursday from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. to learn a sport that is sweeping its way to ice rinks across America. Wear warm clothes!

SCHEDULE FOR MONDAY, MARCH 30



The Bulletin

Wheelchair and Prosthetics Repair

Located at the Host Room in the Conference Center.

Hours are:

6:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.
 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
 4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

In between these hours please call (970) 689-0049 for wheelchair assistance, and (970) 430-2007 for prosthetics needs. Please do not call after 6 p.m. unless it is an emergency.

Medical Room

For emergencies dial 911

Phone is (970) 923-8330. The room is located in the Bedford A conference room across the street from Mountain Chalet Hotel. Stairway access from the mall is next to Christy Sports. Wheelchair access is by the elevator at the far end of the mall above the bus terminal.

Transport: Van transport is available from the Silvertree Hotel to the medical room in the front of the hotel, or by calling the medical room.

After hours: Call the medical room for recorded instructions on how to contact the "on call" medical provider. If unsuccessful, call the hotel operator.

Massage

Complimentary massage is located in the Elbert room in the Silvertree Hotel. Please call (970) 980-7772 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily to schedule an appointment. Appointments will be scheduled until all slots are full.

Transportation Schedule

Event	Load	Depart
Snowmobiling		
First Trip	6:45 a.m.	7:15 a.m.
Second Trip	9 a.m.	9:30 a.m.
<i>Please make sure to load at your correct, scheduled time.</i>		
Sled Hockey	7:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.
Fly Fishing	8 a.m.	8:15 a.m.
Cross Country Skiing		
First Trip	8:20 a.m.	8:45 a.m.
Second Trip	1 p.m.	1:30 p.m.
<i>Buses will run up and down the mountain throughout the day. The 1 p.m. bus will also pick up any participants from the first trip who wish to return to the Conference Center. All remaining participants will be picked up at 3 p.m.</i>		
Hot Springs	9:30 a.m.	10 a.m.
Trapshooting	10 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
Aspen Gondola	10 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
Curling	12:45 p.m.	1 p.m.

WEATHER

TODAY

High: **26°**

Low: **10°**

TOMORROW

High: **35°**

Low: **22°**



Clouds
with
Snow



Clouds
with
Snow